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PRELIMINARY POLICY AND ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR DISCUSSION AT COMMUNITY FORUMS ON
CHINATOWN PLANNING AND REZONING STUDY

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
APRIL 1986

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INTRODUCTION

This report recommends new zoning controls and master plan policies for Chinatown. Part of the Chinatown study area is also recommended for designation as a historic district under Article 10 of the City Planning Code. These proposals are based on prior issue papers and community responses, historic and urban design analyses by Department staff, as well as recommendations from the Chinatown Community Plan (November 1985) by the Chinatown Resource Center, Asian Neighborhood Design and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Plan For Chinatown (September 1985) by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association.

The Chinatown study area includes 34 blocks in whole or in part on the eastern slopes of Nob Hill as well as portions of both Russian Hill and what is traditionally known as North Beach. The boundaries have been slightly revised to cover portions of the Garment Shop Special Use District along Powell Street north of Vallejo Street and to not cover the area around Broadway and Columbus which is more appropriately part of the proposed Broadway Commercial District.

The Financial District lies to the east of Chinatown and just south is the Union Square retail area. Grant Avenue, Stockton Street and the hilly side streets that intersect them comprise Chinatown. The district is one to three blocks in width and about ten blocks in length.

Plans From Community Organizations

Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) In September 1985, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Assocation (the Chinese Six Companies) published a Plan for Chinatown. It was prepared by Blayney and Dyett, Urban and Regional Planners, in consultation with Tosta and Browning, attorneys.

The Plan covers issues of commercial and residential land use, urban form and parking and loading. A central concern of the Plan is to provide additional capacity for retail and commercial development. The Plan achieves this by permitting taller buildings and allowing five to six floors of commercial use in the buildings. The Six Companies' plan would create a Chinatown Special Use District excluding Broadway. Additional capacity for housing is also a primary goal of the plan, with the proposed heights in the plan accommodating from three to five stories of housing in addition to the commercial floors.

The Six Companies' urban form goal is to reinforce the unique character and sunlight in Chinatown's streets. It would be implemented by special standards requiring setbacks of buildings at specified intervals. Heights in the present 160 foot district would be reduced to 105 feet and 65 feet; in the present 105 foot district, heights would be lowered to 88 feet.

The Plan's parking policies would make residential parking requirements for new housing consistent with the pattern of low auto use by residents, increase facilities for public parking and minimize truck loading and unloading conflicts.

The CCBA views its Plan as "an alternative to be considered with the Environmental Impact Report on the Chinatown rezoning".

The CCBA has also separately endorsed creation of a Historic District in Chinatown with 192 rated buildings, identical to the boundaries proposed by Patrick Mc Grew to the Landmarks Board November 1985. The Landmarks Board has since recommended a larger district.

Asian Neighborhood Design, Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Chinatown Resource Center In October, 1985, these three community organizations assisted by advice from a number of other groups, prepared a Chinatown Community Plan.

In addition to the issues covered by the CCBA Plan, the plan by the community organizations covers issues of historic preservation, open space and transportation. A central concern is the preservation and improvement of existing housing and creation of new low income housing. Resident-serving businesses are emphasized.

The Plan differs from the CCBA Plan in that only on Broadway, Kearny and Columbus could a newly constructed building have five floors of commercial use. Five floors would be possible only if at least twice as much low income housing or three times as much market rate combined with low income housing were constructed either on-site or within 1000 feet of Chinatown. Elsewhere in the study area, the Plan would permit only the ground story to be occupied by commercial use.

The Plan by the three community organizations calls for a large historic district covering both the Grant and Stockton corridors.

In terms of urban design, the Plan proposes to lower height within the larger historic district (324 buildings) to 50 feet or to the cornice line of adjacent buildings whichever is lower. For the remainder of the study area, the Plan proposes a 65 foot limit with a 20 foot height bonus for projects containing all low income housing or community space above the first floor.

Commercial development would be regulated in several new use districts in order to limit the size of new storefronts and create new controls for financial institutions and nationally franchised fast food operations. Transportation policies address parking, transit and commercial loading.

A comparison between the Department of City Planning Proposals and those of the Chinese Six Companies and the community organizations is presented in the appendix.

Other Studies

In the early 1970's, consultants for the City Planning Department and an advisory committee from Chinatown issued a Housing and Recreation Study ("701") for both Chinatown and North Beach. Policies from this study were later adopted by the Planning Commission and used by the City in allocating federal assistance programs for local housing and neighborhood improvements. However, this study did not result in rezoning to protect existing housing and neighborhood businesses. A follow-up study in 1979 on whether a special Residential Code Enforcement Program should be pursued in Chinatown concluded that a voluntary program was preferable.

The Residential Rezoning Study, 1978, adjusted and in many cases reduced residential zoning densities throughout the city. Despite its predominantly commercial zoning Chinatown contains many dwellings. About half the floor area in the study area is used for residential purposes. Although the need for change was recognized, no zoning action was taken in 1978.

The Downtown Plan, published by the Planning Commission in 1983 and adopted as part of the San Francisco Master Plan in November 1984, recommends separate study for Chinatown because its unique qualities and land use patterns differ entirely with Downtown.

The Neighborhood Commercial Rezoning Study (NCRS), adopted on a one-year interim basis in March of 1985, established new policies and development controls for commercial zones in San Francisco neighborhoods, but again excluded most of Chinatown except for the Broadway corridor. The portion of Chinatown included in the NCRS was due to the actions of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers in seeking interim zoning controls and a rezoning study for Broadway and portions of North Beach. In 1984, an interim Housing Conservation Special Use District to control conversion of upper floor housing units was imposed by the Planning Commission in the Broadway-North Beach area. Due to the special characteristics of Broadway, with its heavy traffic and adult entertainment, NCRS treats the street as an individual district with specialized regulations.

The sixty-five foot height limit along Broadway was revised to require conditional use approval for any development over 40 feet under the interim NCRS controls. The Chinatown Study assumed further evaluation of residential capacities and heights, issues that were not fully explored in the NCRS.

Nob Hill Height Reclassification In December 1985, the Board of Supervisors reduced the height limits at the top of Nob Hill from 160 feet to 65 feet approving the recommendation of the City Planning Commission and local residents. Earlier, on November 30, 1984, the Board, responding to requests of the Nob Hill Neighbors, had unanimously approved an interim reduction to 65 feet while the matter was studied by the Planning staff.

Reasons for reducing the height were related to problems of additional congestion and protecting internal views. Also important was the relationship to nearby height districts downhill which in some cases were lower. Further height reductions on the east slope of Nob Hill are pending Board action.

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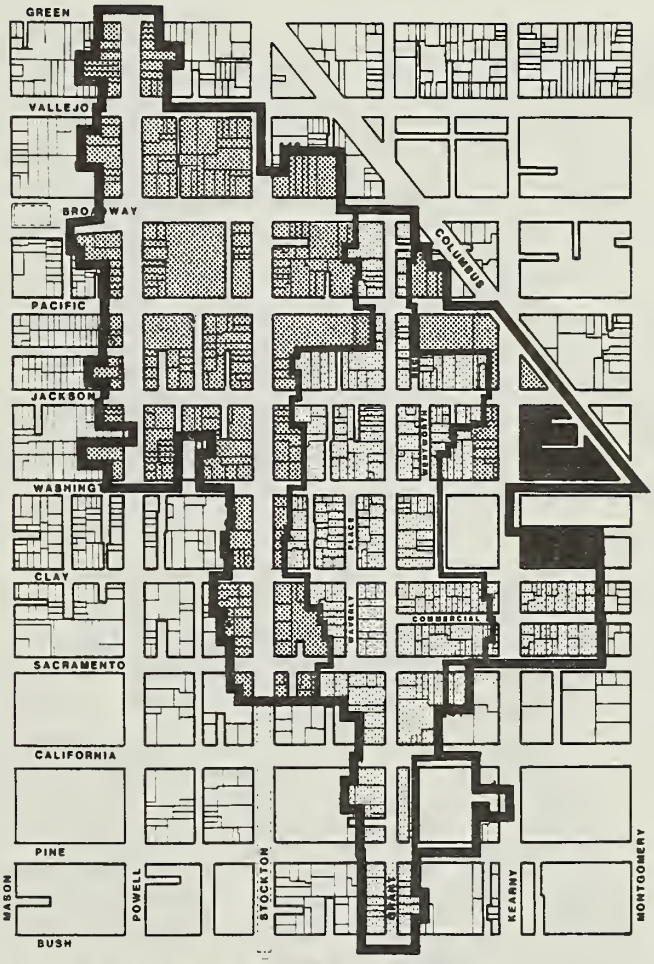
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Height District Changes

Present Controls - Existing permanent height districts include limits of 88 feet along Grant Avenue, 160 feet south of Washington Street, 105 feet north of Washington Street and 65 feet along Broadway.

Under the Chinatown and Neighborhood Commercial Interim Controls, projects over 40 feet in height must be reviewed by the Planning Commission. In addition, under the Sunlight in Parks law, any project near a public park is also subject to special review.

Proposed Controls - Height regulations would be simplified. The Grant Avenue corridor and some adjacent alleys which are proposed as an Historic District and the Commercial Street corridor could have a permitted height of 50 feet. Most of the remainder of the Study Area would have a maximum permitted height of 65 feet. In most cases, the upper floors of a new building would be developed only as housing. However, in the proposed Community Business District additional commercial space would be permitted if a matching amount of low/moderate income housing were built or rehabilitated.



Proposed Heights Chinatown Study Area

50 Ft.
65 Ft.
65-200 Ft.

Commercial Floor Area Ratios

Present Controls - Interim controls were adopted in January, 1985 and will expire in April 1986. North of Washington Street, the maximum area of a commercial use in a building could be 4.8 times its lot area. South of Washington Street, the maximum area of commercial use in a new building could be six times its lot area.

Existing commercial space in Chinatown buildings averages 1.3 times the lot area for a building. Most buildings have other uses in addition to stores or offices.

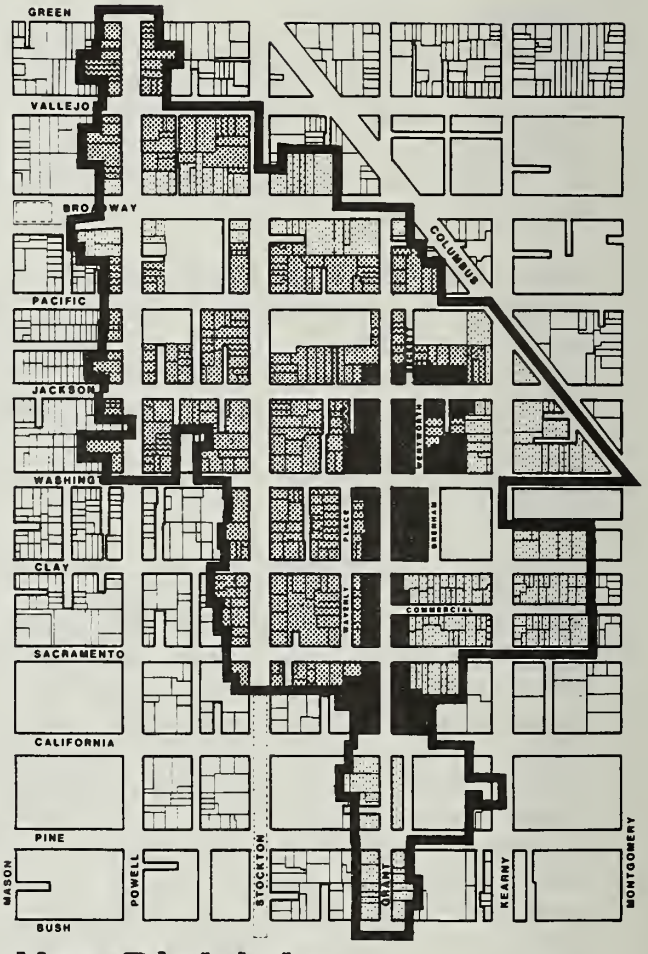
Proposed Controls - Proposed controls would limit commercial development to 2.8 times the lot area along Broadway and Kearny, twice the lot area in the Grant Avenue Visitor Retail area, and to one times the lot area for the remainder of the area.

However, a building along Broadway or Kearny could be allowed additional commercial square footage for construction or substantial rehabilitation of low or moderate income housing.

Districts

Present Controls - The present two districts divide Chinatown at Washington Street. South of Washington is the interim C-3-C "'Downtown' - Chinatown" District. North of Washington is the interim C-2-C "'Community Business'-Chinatown" District. This zoning is based on the zoning pattern in Chinatown before the enactment of the new Downtown Plan.

Proposed Controls - Chinatown would be rezoned into three new use districts - Residential/Neighborhood Commercial, Community Business, and Visitor Retail.



Use Districts

COMMUNITY BUSINESS

VISITOR RETAIL

RESIDENTIAL/NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

Bulk, Setbacks, Sun Access

Present Controls - Bulk rules now permit buildings four or five times longer or wider than the typical building. There are no setback or sun access regulations.

Proposed Controls - The total width of projects would be limited and provisions for architectural treatments would make buildings exceeding 50 feet in width appear as several smaller ones. Sun access provisions (15 foot setbacks at the third story or higher would apply to selected streets.

Preservation of Housing

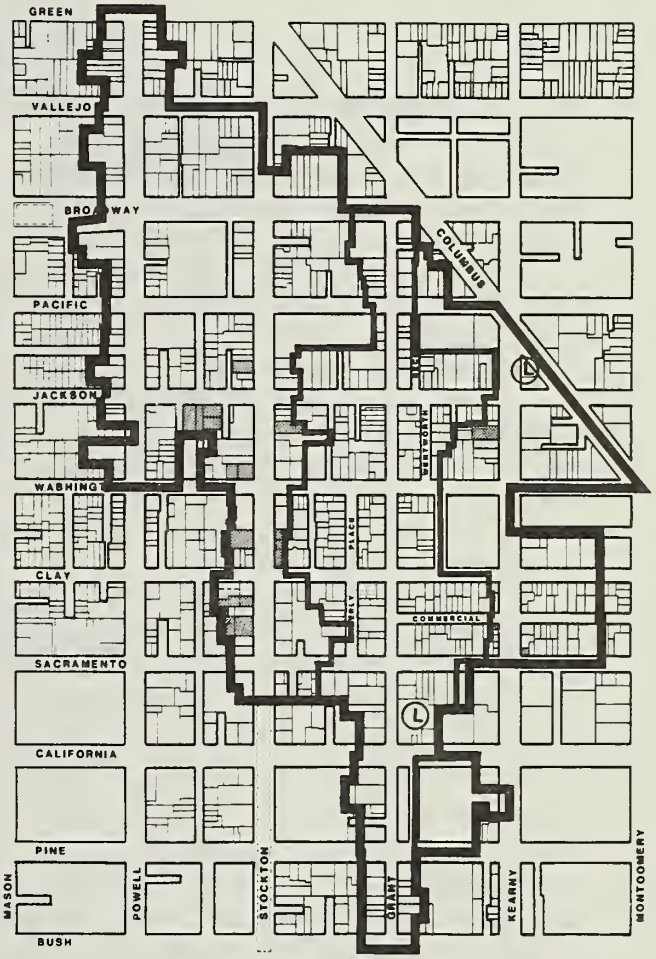
Present Controls - The Residential Hotel Ordinance requires 1 to 1 replacement or in-lieu fees for demolition of residential hotel units. Residential hotel units are over 60% of the housing stock in Chinatown. In 1985, the Board of Supervisors enacted temporary moratoriums on any residential hotel conversions in Chinatown or North Beach and on the demolition of Chinatown housing.

Proposed Controls - The proposed control would require one to one replacement for removal of any housing units.

Historic District

Present Controls - In November, 1985 the Board of Supervisors initiated an Historic District covering the Grant Avenue corridor and adjacent alleys. This action requires that for six months any demolitions or exterior alterations be reviewed under the "Certificate of Appropriateness" procedure of the Landmarks Board.

Proposed Controls A permanent Historic District along the Grant Avenue corridor and designation of individual landmark structures along Stockton and Kearny Streets are recommended.



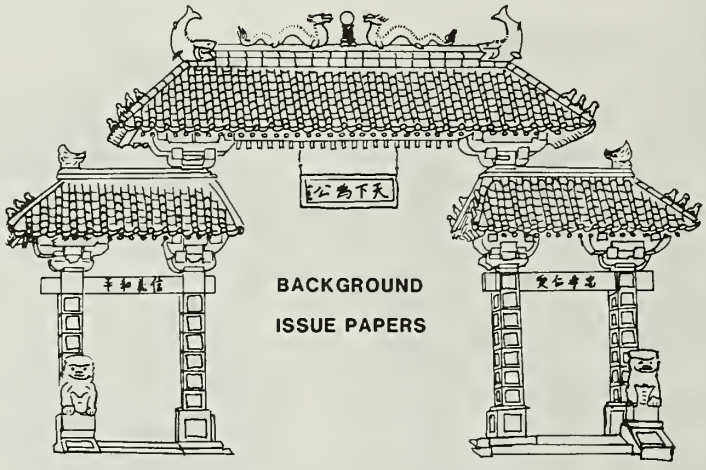
Proposed Historic District

BOUNDARY OF PROPOSED DISTRICT

(L) EXISTING CITY LANDMARKS

PROPOSED INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKS

CHINATOWN PLANNING
&
REZONING STUDY



BACKGROUND

ISSUE PAPERS

Prepared By
San Francisco Department of City Planning

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Findings From the Issue Papers and Community Forums

The Department of City Planning has been coordinating a planning and rezoning study study of Chinatown over the past two years, following the determination that Chinatown was an area distinct from the Downtown. Since December 1983, the Department has prepared five issue papers providing information and analysis on planning issues in Chinatown. The publication of each issue paper was followed by a community forum, conducted in both in English and Cantonese, to discuss staff findings. Conclusions about the future of Chinatown were were drawn from this process. Master Plan Policies and objectives for Chinatown emerged both from the issue papers and from the Plans prepared by the Chinese Six Companies and the three community organizations.

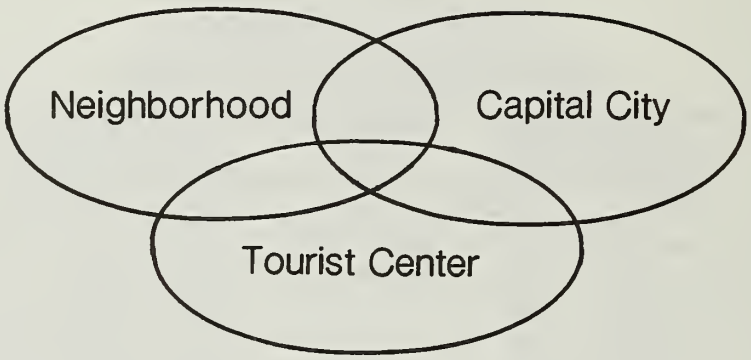
Highlights from DCP analyses and forums are described below:

Population - Although Chinatown grew rapidly after the Gold Rush, exclusionary U.S. immigration policies limited immigration between the 1880's and 1960's. With little new population growth affecting the community, the residentail population (many of whom were older males) remained stable. Chinatown was both the residence and shopping area for nearly all San Francisco Chinese, even though in the 1920's and 1930's, the community's population actually declined causing vacant storefronts and housing.

Chinatown's population began to change in the late 1960's with the liberalization of immigration laws. Migration from Hong Kong and other areas of Chinese population in Asia brought about a large increase in Chinatown's population, creating a shortage of affordable housing. The new population brought new vitality to the neighborhood and enlarged the market for Asian goods. Concurrently, Chinese residents from Chinatown began to move into other neighborhoods of San Francisco, notably the Richmond and Sunset districts. Although many Chinese left Chinatown, they have maintained a strong level of contact with religious, social and political institutions and have continued to shop in Chinatown.

The study area population in 1980 was estimated at 10,000, virtually all of whom are Chinese. The arrival of young families since that time has probably increased population. The study area is part of 13 contiguous census tracts in the northeastern part of the city whose total 29,000 Chinese residents represent 35% of the total Chinese population in San Francisco. In 1979, median household income of the study area population (by census tract) was about $10,100, half the median household income in San Francisco ($20,550). For the most part, income levels of Chinese in other parts of San Francisco are higher than those in Chinatown.

The greatest concern expressed at the February 1984 Forum was the standard of living space for the largely elderly and Asian immigrant population now living in the Chinatown Core, and the availability of resources (housing, shops, social agencies) to serve this population. The Forum concluded that Chinatown had three important and mutually supportive functions: a neighborhood, capital city for Chinese Americans and lastly a tourist attraction.



Housing - The April 1984 Forums were concerned with housing, with a view toward the retention of existing units and opportunities for new development. The Study Area presently contains about 6,500 housing units, about 60% of which are in residential hotels. Approximately half of the total built space in Chinatown is used for housing.

Service Agencies such as Self Help for the Elderly criticized the City for not reaching the ambitious housing goals of the "701" Study of Housing and Recreation in Chinatown. Census and city statistics on housing units indicate an approximate loss of 1,000 to 1,500 housing units in the study area between 1970 and 1980. A variety of city regulations, including the rent stabilization ordinance and an ordinance regulating the conversion of residential hotels to other uses have helped reduce this steady loss of housing units in recent years. The ownership of many rental units by family and district associations also has been a stabilizing influence.

Although people attending the forum agreed about the importance of retaining, and in some cases, rehabilitating existing units, there was less agreement on new housing and whether it should be primarily low- and moderate-income subsidized or market-rate units.

Commerce and Employment - The Chinatown Study Area contains about 1,200 businesses and an estimated 20,000 full- and part-time jobs. About two-thirds of the local businesses surveyed by the City Planning staff indicated that at least half of their customers are people living in the Chinatown Core or in adjacent neighborhoods. Commercial activities use about 33% of the building space in Chinatown. Half (50%) of the space is used for housing. The remaining the space in Chinatown - approximately 17% - is divided between institutions, garment factories and public facilities.

During the 1960s, the financial district began to expand westward towards Chinatown. Commercial activity in Chinatown also increased. Now Chinatown is surrounded on three sides by intensely developed districts with high land values. The Financial District is to the east, to the west are Nob Hill's luxury hotels and middle-to-high-income residences and the prestigious Union Square retail area is adjacent to the Chinatown Gate south of Bush Street. Both internal growth and the expansion of the financial district have put pressure on existing housing and commercial space in Chinatown. Given these land use trends, expansion of Chinatown northward into North Beach and westward up Russian Hill is not surprising.

New trade and political relations with China, Taiwan and Hong Kong have also enhanced Chinatown's importance as a center for the Chinese community in the United States. These developments have led to a greater scope of trade and investment.

Chinatown has always attracted visitors from outside the community. The oriental character of the neighborhood contributed to the growth of restaurants and retail stores serving a large tourist population. The development of Chinatown's tourist trade was also enhanced by its proximity to other tourist attractions, such as Broadway, North Beach and Fisherman's Wharf and of course, the Downtown retail district.

Merchants participating in the August 1984 Forums expressed concern about rising rents, parking shortages and traffic congestion. The pressure on commercial rents has made it difficult for certain types of activities to afford commercial space. High-rent tenants, such as banks, have displaced many community-serving uses. While some people are skeptical that additional zoning controls on certain businesses can preserve neighborhood serving uses, others believe such controls are necessary to maintain a balance of commercial businesses. Yet others feel additional commercial space can help alleviate increasing rents.

Transportation - This paper highlighted well known facts about high pedestrian volumes and intensive use of public transportation. Since Chinatown is adjacent to the financial district, downtown commute patterns and goods movement are also major contributors to traffic. There was consensus at the January 1985 Forums on the importance of pedestrian space and the need for more frequent and less crowded bus service. People also voiced a concern for more off-street parking spaces and stricter traffic enforcement. Nonetheless, there was less agreement on where to accommodate additional off-street spaces. The Department was requested to evaluate how increased traffic volumes could be accomodated on Chinatown's streets.

Urban Design, Preservation, Open Space - The last issue paper, which has not yet been discussed in a community forum, covers a number of design questions. Urban design issues include determination of appropriate heights and sizes for new buildings. It is important that new buildings fit in with and complement the generally historic character of Chinatown. Most existing buildings were constructed between 1907 and 1914, have narrow street frontages and are less than three stories in height. Based on the analysis in this issue paper, revised height and bulk regulations are being proposed in the Summary report.

The area west of Kearny Street, between California and Broadway has been the center of Chinese culture and life in California and the West Coast for over a century. Although physically destroyed by the 1906 quake and fire, its continuity as a commercial and residential area for Chinese population remains remarkably unbroken. The ethnic transitions common in most other older neighborhoods of major cities never occured in Chinatown. The rebuilding of Chinatown after the earthquake applied Chinese styles of architectural detailing to early 20th Century buildings. These building now provide a visible and symbolic demarcation of the heritage of this unique area of San Francisco. Its preservation is proposed through creation of Historic District.

Open space needs in Chinatown are high and although funding has been available, site acquisition for additional park space has been delayed by controversies and opposition from owners of potential sites and others. Pursuit of other open space programs, such as alleyway beautification, better utilization of portions of the Ping Yuen housing sites and protection of sunlight on sidewalks are feasible short term actions but there remains a long term need for additional open space.

Social Services As a neighborhood, Chinatown contains an unusually large number of public and private institutions and social service agencies serving such diverse needs as help to newcomers, health, care care and job training. The mix of agencies make Chinatown an unusually supportive environment for recent immigrants and for senior citizens. However, these facilities often compete at a disadvantage with commercial uses for space. Special incentives for additional space need to be included in the rezoning proposal.

Conclusions

Chinatown is an intensively developed and populated "City within a City" that functions as a center for Chinese Americans, as a residential neighborhood and as a major visitor attraction. Chinatown has a distinct urban and architectural character and cultural heritage. These essential features should be ensured over time through an established preservation program.

Although adjacent to Downtown, Chinatown is not the appropriate setting for tall buildings. Existing buildings average three to four stories in height. In order to prevent a drastic change in neighborhood scale and physical unity, no new buildings in Chinatown should be more than six stories in height.

Existing housing in Chinatown should be retained and upgraded or where necessary replaced by sound units with comparable rents. Development controls should create capacity for creation of new housing.

Grant Avenue is a specialty shopping street with a concentration of Chinese style architectural detailing that contributes to the city's visual diversity. The street's present character and scale should be preserved but new zoning policies should enable a modest potential for future commercial expansion.

Stockton Street is both a local and regional specialty shopping street. Although some new commercial and residential development may be possible, Stockton Street should remain principally in its present character, with emphasis on food stores. Chinatown's east-west streets which are less than 50 feet wide do not have as much potential for additonal commercial development as Stockton or Grant.

Kearny Street and vicinity have more potential for added commercial and office development than other parts of Chinatown. Any changes to Kearny or nearby properties, however, should be carefully managed in order to avoid excessive new development.

The sunny and windfree climate of Chinatown is important to the comfort of residents and visitors especially because most people walk rather than drive in Chinatown. Zoning controls should be shaped to protect the community's excellent climate.

Planning Goals

The following goals are drawn from the conclusions reached after the forums as well as the plans submitted from the community groups. They provide a basis for the Department's zoning recommendations.

GOALS FOR CHINATOWN	FUNCTIONS SERVED
1. Retain Chinatown's mutually supportive functions as a neighborhood, capital city, and visitor attraction.	
2. Preserve the distinctive urban character and cultural heritage of Chinatown.	(Capital City and Major Visitor Attraction).
3. Create an attractive and functional environment for existing commercial uses in Chinatown, including those serving the needs of the local population. Enhance the visibility of these uses.	(Capital City and Neighborhood).
4. Conserve and improve Chinatown's housing; stabilize and where possible, increase the supply.	(Neighborhood)
5. Retain Chinatown's historic role as a regional and national center for Chinese cultural, civic and community institutions.	(Capital City)
6. Recognize the special needs of Chinatown's residential population for improved quality of life, employment opportunities, social services, safer housing and more open space.	(Neighborhood)
7. Manage transportation impacts to stabilize or reduce the difficulties of walking, driving, delivering goods, parking or using transit in Chinatown.	(Capital City, Neighborhood, Visitor Attraction)
8. Recognize and protect the relatively sunny and windfree climate in Chinatown.	(Capital City, Neighborhood, Major Visitor Attraction).

1. Retain Chinatown's mutually supportive functions as neighborhood capitol city, and visitor attraction.

   Encourage intensified mixed use development in appropriate areas.

2. Preserve the distinctive urban character and cultural heritage of Chinatown.

   Relate building height and bulk to the character of Chinatown and adjacent areas.

   Promote a building form that harmonizes with the scale of existing buildings and width of Chinatown's streets.

   Maintain the low rise scale of Chinatown's buildings.

   Adopt setback requirements for new buildings above 40 feet or the average height line in any given block.

   Establish design guidelines for new Chinatown developments to insure that they complement and enhance the special character of Chinatown.

   Designate portions of Chinatown as a local Historic District.

   Establish graduated code requirements for seismic safety work.

3. Create an attractive and functional environment for existing commercial uses in Chinatown, including those serving the needs of the local population. Enhance the visibility of these uses.

   Maintain Grant Ave as the traditional specialty retailing area.

   Protect neighborhood serving retail and service uses in other parts of the area.

   Define subdistricts based on the predominant type of ground level use.

   Limit the floor area and frontage of all new ground level uses to permit more diversity and opportunity for small shops.

   Require conditional use review for fast food establishments.

Adopt guidelines to limit new financial institutions.

Minimize truck loading/unloading conflicts; implement concentrated commercial loading zones and uniform truck delivery schedules.

Increase public parking opportunities; set rates to discourage long term parking.

4. **Conserve and improve Chinatown's housing; stabilize and where possible, increase the supply.**

Link new residential development to new commercial development.

Conserve existing housing along Powell and encourage new housing on California.

Ensure adequate relocation assistance for all displaced persons.

Prohibit the net loss of housing due to demolition.

Require 1:1 replacement of low cost housing removed by new development.

Encourage affordable housing projects.

Establish parking standards based on residents' needs.

5. **Retain Chinatown's historic role as a regional and national center for Chinese cultural, civic and community institutions.**

Don't apply commercial floor area ratio limits to institutions and community facilities.

6. **Recognize the special needs of Chinatown's residential population for improved quality of life, employment opportunities, social services, safer housing and more open space.**

Adopt building code and density standards which encourage group housing.

Maximize sun access to public open spaces.

Continue efforts to secure additional and more varied open space using eminent domain procedures if necessary. Emphasize both conventional and innovative means of assembling open space.

Pursue air rights and other open space development on Ping Yuen sites.

Aggressively continue to implement the alleyway program and allocate earmarked potential revenue sources to the work. Provide more city maintenance for existing improved alleyways.

Encourage and support the revamping and redesign of Portsmouth Square which is now underway by the Recreation and Parks Department.

Maximize use of existing public recreation facilities through better maintenance.

Improve existing school yards and provide for their use during non- school hours.

7. Manage transportation impacts to stabilize or reduce the difficulties of walking, driving, delivering goods, parking or using transit in Chinatown.

Improve and increase parking enforcement; use enforcement and rate structures to encourage short term parking; operate meters seven days a week.

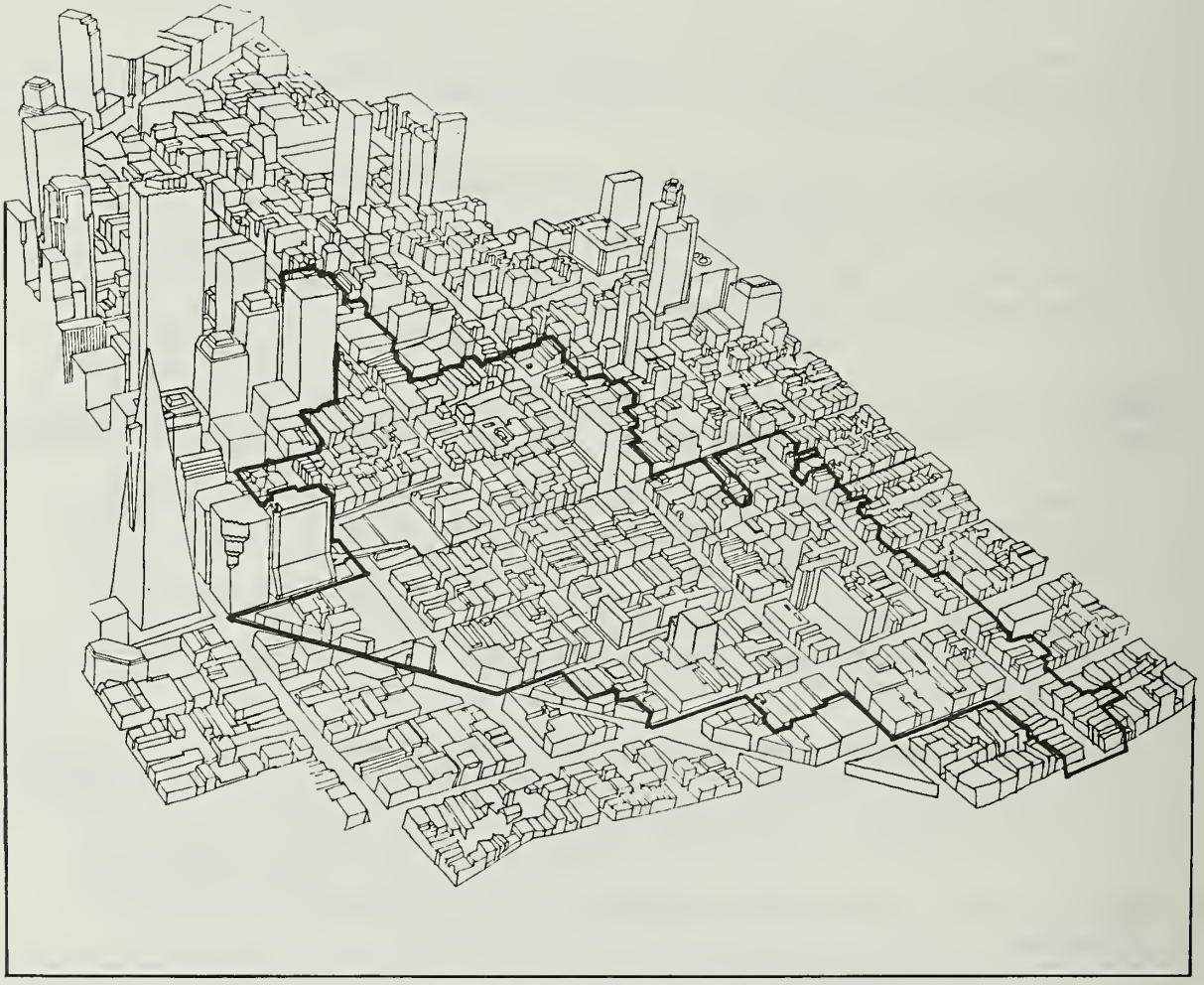
Make MUNI routes more reflective of and responsive to Chinatown ridership, including bilingual signage, schedules, maps.

Implement measures responsive to pedestrian needs such as scramble system intersections, increased duration of walk signals, and limits on auto use in alleys.

8. Recognize and protect the relatively sunny and windfree climate in Chinatown.

Require building stepbacks to maintain sunlight on opposite sidewalks.

Maintain ground level wind currents in Chinatown at a level that is comfortable, year round, for pedestrians.



ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

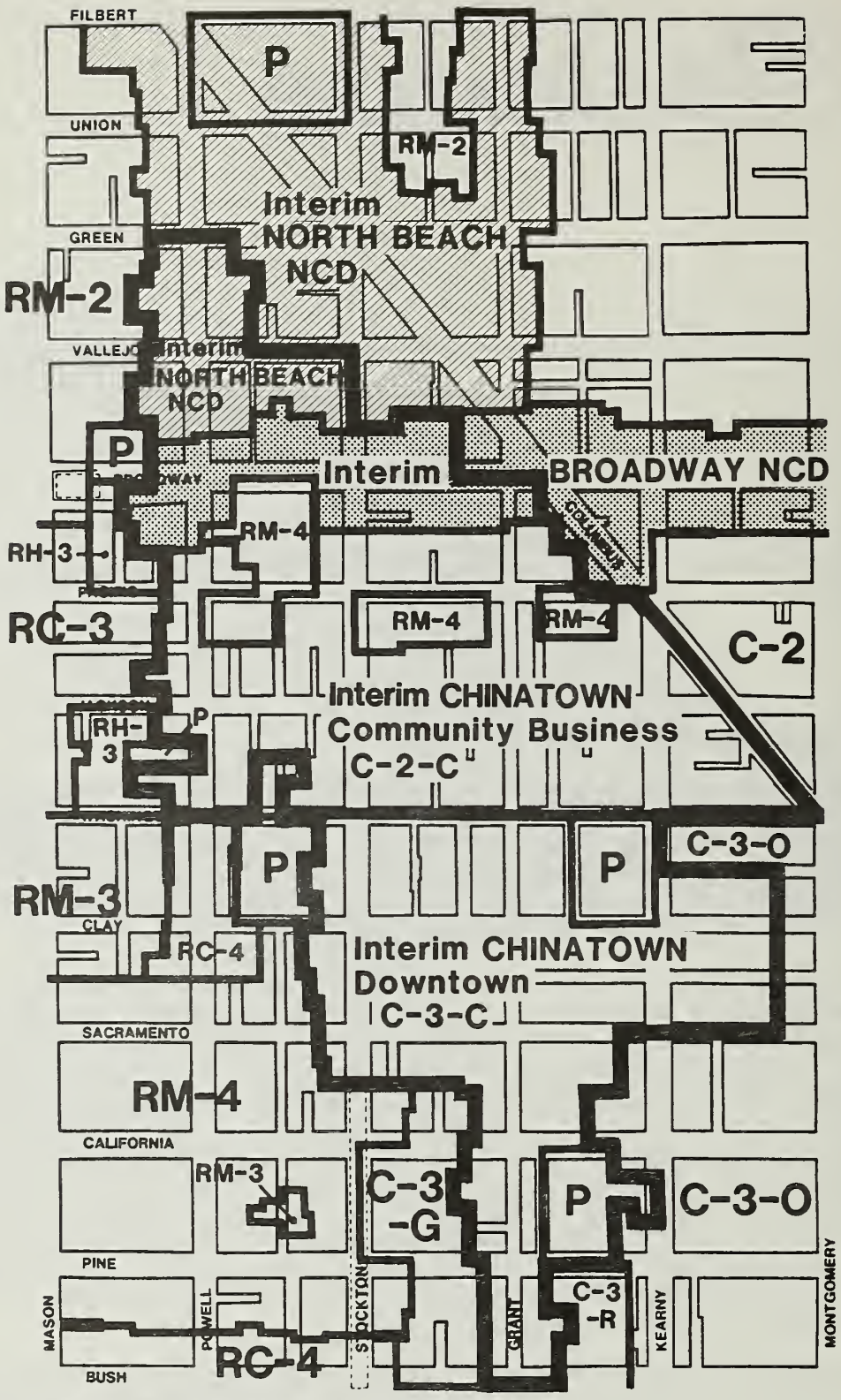
Drawing from the proposed Master Plan objectives and policies, this report concludes with a preliminary zoning proposal for review and further discussion.

Why New Zoning is Necessary

The Existing Development Pattern is Inconsistent with Older Zoning Although nearly all zoning districts in the study area are classified as commercial (non-commercially zoned land consists of three parks and the Ping Yuen and portions of Mei Lun public housing sites), approximately half of the existing space is used for housing. The remainder is occupied by commerce, light industry or institutions (including district associations).

Floor area ratios depict the size of a building in relation to the size of the lot upon which the building sits. There is an estimated existing total commercial floor area of about 2,000,000 square feet including stores and offices, but excluding quasi-commercial space such as associations, schools and clubs. Thus the existing commercial floor area ratio for Chinatown is estimated to be close to 1:1. If a broader definition of commercial space is applied the ratio would be closer to 1.5 to 1. Overall, the floor area of the average building in Chinatown is 3.4 times the size of its lot. The amount of residential space and non-residential space is roughly the same: 3,400,000 square feet for housing and 3,400,000 square feet for other non-residential uses. Since the goal is to continue with a mix of uses, revised zoning must recognize both commercial and residential patterns, rather than providing for wholly commercial development in Chinatown.

As documented in earlier studies, Chinatown's planning issues are similar to those in other parts of the city, especially those related to residential and small business displacement. Throughout the 1970's and early 1980's the study of new controls had been postponed primarily because the Chinatown community itself had not reached consensus on either the problems or potential solutions. Now the community has become directly involved.



EXISTING ZONING
CHINATOWN VICINITY

CHINATOWN STUDY AREA

The Downtown Plan Necessitates Some Changes In terms of the present permanent zoning, with the exception of the Broadway corridor, Chinatown is divided between the Downtown (C-3-G) zoning district and Community Business (C-2) zoning (see existing zoning map). The C-2 zoning provisions were adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1960. One aspect of Chinatown's special character and circumstances was recognized officially by the city in 1962 when the Chinatown Garment District was established to permit manufacture of clothing in a portion of the C-2 Community Business District. In no other C-2 District in the city was this permitted.

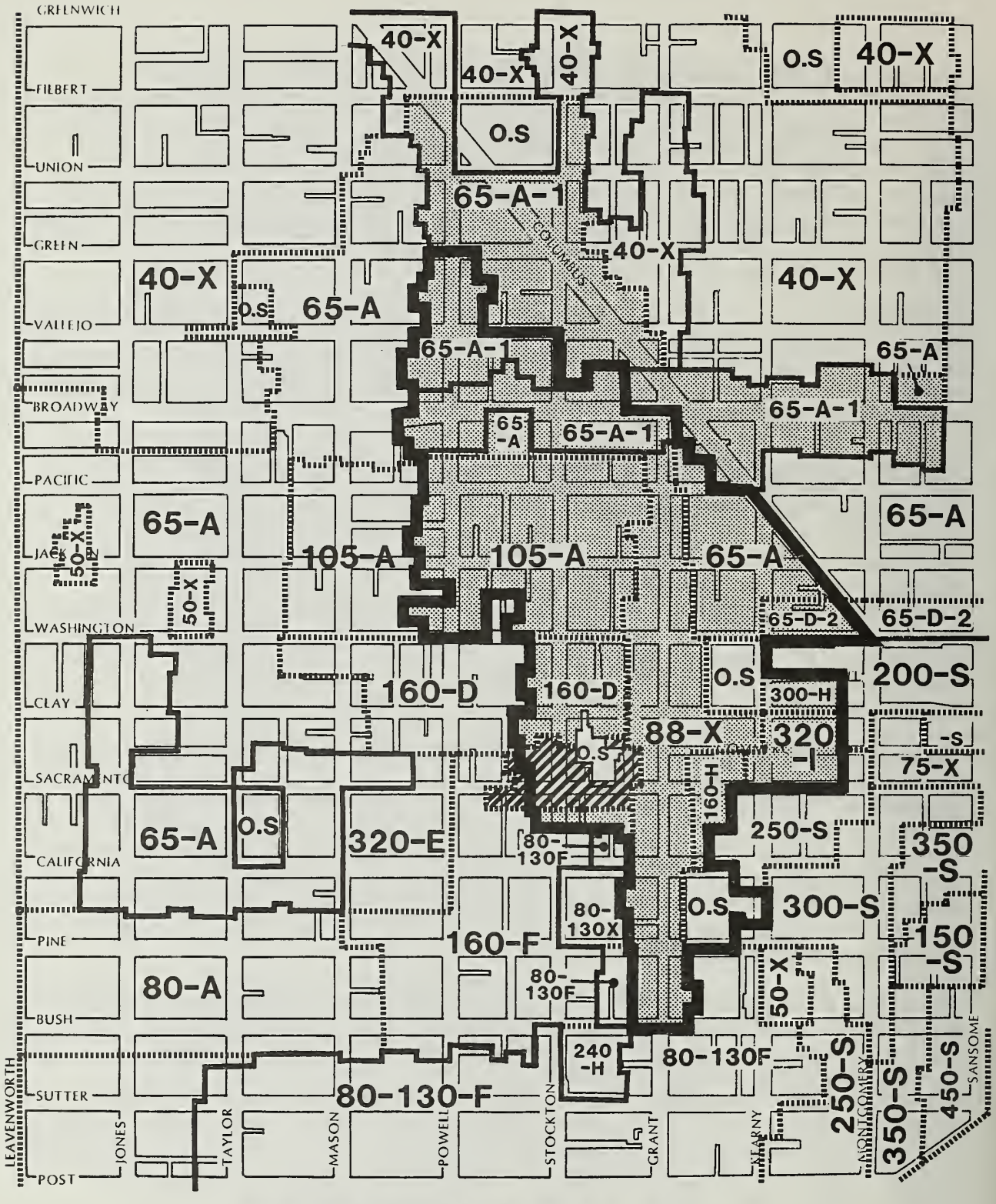
The 1968 downtown rezoning created the C-3-G District which broke up what had been one Downtown C-3 district classification into four sub-districts. None of the commercial zoning districts recognized Chinatown's mixed use character, where buildings generally consist of two to three stories of residences above ground level retail uses.

Interim Controls Are Not the Final Answer In the past year, both the C-3 and C-2 zoning districts have been replaced by new zoning controls for the Downtown and Neighborhood Commercial districts, respectively. Interim Neighborhood Commercial zoning controls for the Broadway and North Beach districts cover the northernmost part of Chinatown. In October 1984, the Planning Commission established a Special Use District for Chinatown regulating the removal of housing units and the creation of new financial institutions. In January 1985, the Commission established interim zoning districts with standards somewhat similar to those for the revised C-3 and C-2 standards (C-3-C and C-2-C). In October, 1985 these interim controls were renewed for six additional months until April, 1986.

Commercial Floor Area ratios under interim controls are 4.8 to 1 for C-2-C (Community Business - Chinatown) district and 6.0 to 1 for C-3-C (Downtown Commercial - Chinatown) district. Under the older permanent controls the ratios were much higher and would have permitted a 10 story commercial building adjacent to a downtown district or even a 13 story building should construction have occured on a corner lot next to a downtown district. These ratios are far in excess of the existing conditions in Chinatown where, on the average a building has between 1 and 2 stories of commercial use with the remainder for housing or Associations.

There are Several Other Reasons to Re-evaluate Height Limits Now Allowable heights also need study because existing height districts have permitted a few new buildings to be constructed at a scale and bulk out of character with the surrounding buildings. Adjustments in height districts are advisable to facilitate compliance with Proposition K, a regulation endorsed by San Francisco voters to protect certain parks and squares from building shadows. The Downtown Plan adjusts heights in adjacent areas. In addition, the height district on the crest of Nob Hill above Chinatown also has recently been reduced to 65 feet.

Lastly, preservation issues need study because existing zoning controls make no provision for the preservation of housing, architecturally significant buildings or for specific environmental needs such as protection of sunlight on sidewalks.



EXISTING HEIGHT DISTRICTS IN STUDY AREA AND VICINITY

CHINATOWN STUDY AREA

AREA WHERE INTERIM CONTROLS REQUIRE CONDITIONAL USE APPROVAL FOR BUILDINGS OVER 40 FEET IN HEIGHT

SUN ACCESS HEIGHT RECLASSIFICATION 50-100 FEET

Concepts from North of Market, South of Market, Van Ness Zoning Studies May be Applicable to Chinatown These studies of areas near Downtown share common concerns on the preservation of existing housing and the opportunities to create additional new housing.

In the North of Market, in the zoning controls permanently adopted in 1985, commercial development was limited in favor of housing as a principal permitted use. Heights of up to 130 feet above a normally permitted 80 feet are allowed only when a contribution is made to a housing rehabilitation fund.

In the South of Market several areas previously zoned for industry or commercial development are being rezoned to a residential classification to protect and increase the housing in these areas.

On Van Ness Avenue, the Department's plan proposes that new commercial development be allowed in projects only when there is a 3 to 1 ratio of housing to commercial space.

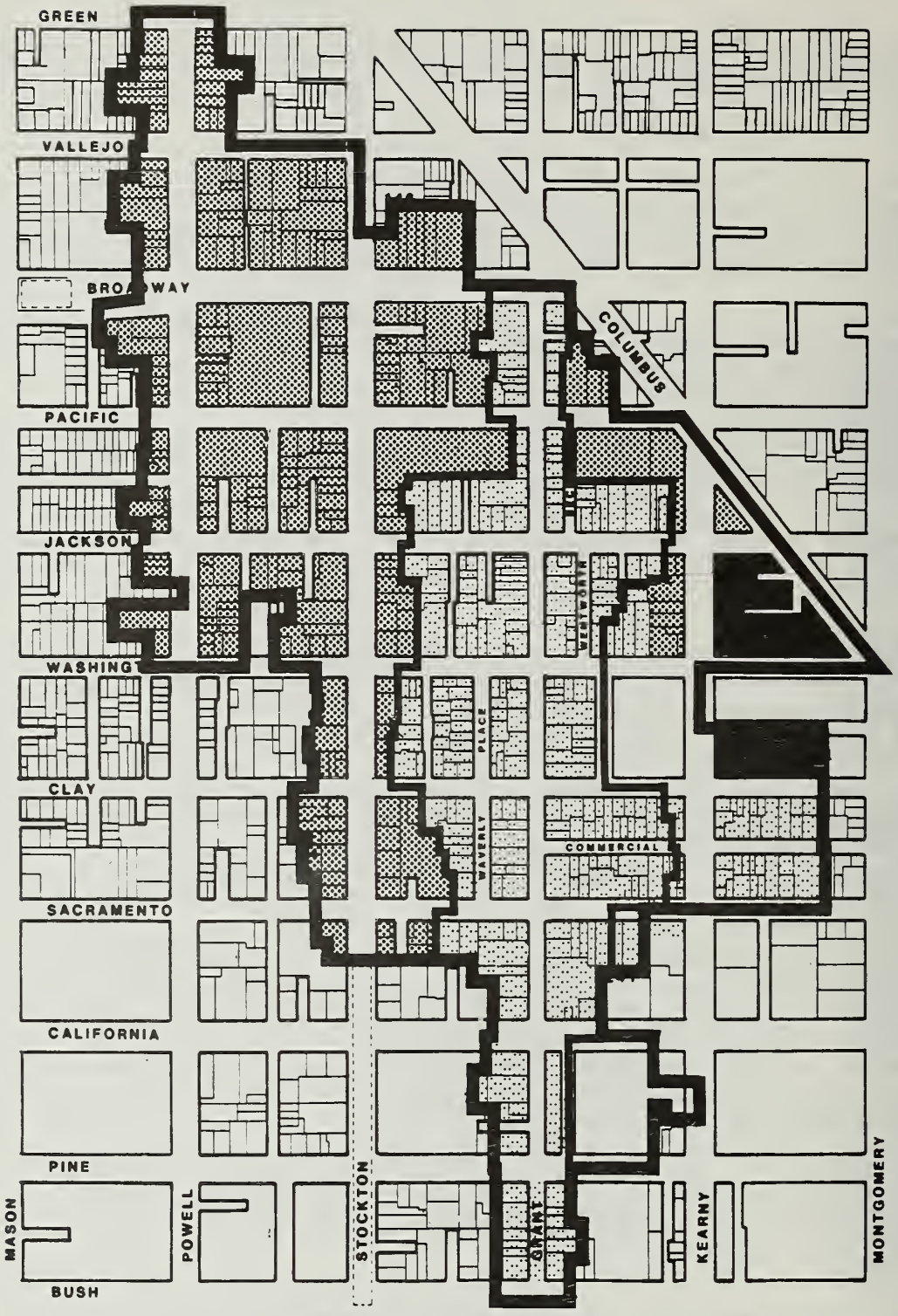
Actions on Historic Preservation Necessitate Coordination with Zoning Creation of a proposed historic district should be coordinated with zoning controls that reinforce the purposes of the district.

Zoning Partially Addresses Problems of Displacement Pressures According to a April 1985 survey by the Department of City Planning on rents per square foot in Chinatown, the strongest demand is for ground floor retail space at $2.00 to $6.00 per square foot per month. The rent asked for office space ranges from $1.00 to $2.40 per sqaure foot. Rent levels for residential space, based on average room size of 120 square feet were $ 118.50, or $.98 per square foot based on 1984 reports submitted to the city under the Residential Hotel Ordinance. These prices indicate that retail sales or services can outbid housing and lower volume neighborhood serving businesses or institutions.

Earlier issue papers and the Rezoning Study forums have identified need for additional housing and for preservation of enterprises serving local residents. Without revision in zoning controls, this need would not be addressed since only the highest revenue producing uses -- retail and offices -- would likely be considered in new construction. Zoning changes should ensure a balance between needs and the demand for both commercial and residential space.

Zoning changes also should recognize the existing mixed use pattern. Presently, there are no positive incentives for housing and the 1:1 parking standard for residential use discourages the construction of new housing, especially on small lots.

Cooperation of Community Organizations is a Key Element The involvement and participation of community organizations and interests in the planning process and their positive contributions of ideas and civic purpose is, in the final analysis, one of the most crucial of the reasons for studying and resolving these difficult issues.



PROPOSED HEIGHTS

50 Ft.

65 Ft.

65-200 Ft.

Proposed Regulations

1. Height

Height regulations control the number of stories that can be built for new buildings or for additions. Seventy-five percent of the structures in Chinatown are three stories or less in height. There are taller buildings to the east and similarly scaled or lower buildings to the north and north west. Master Plan policies for heights in Chinatown are proposed (1) to relate building height to the character of Chinatown and adjacent areas and (2) to maintain the low rise character of Chinatown.

The recommended revisions to Chinatown's height districts as shown on the accompanying map are intended to differentiate Chinatown as an area of lower intensity commercial activity, specialized retail trade, housing and valued small-scale architectural resources from the high density office and commercial center. The regulations are based on existing building heights, street widths and the scale of surrounding districts to the north and west.

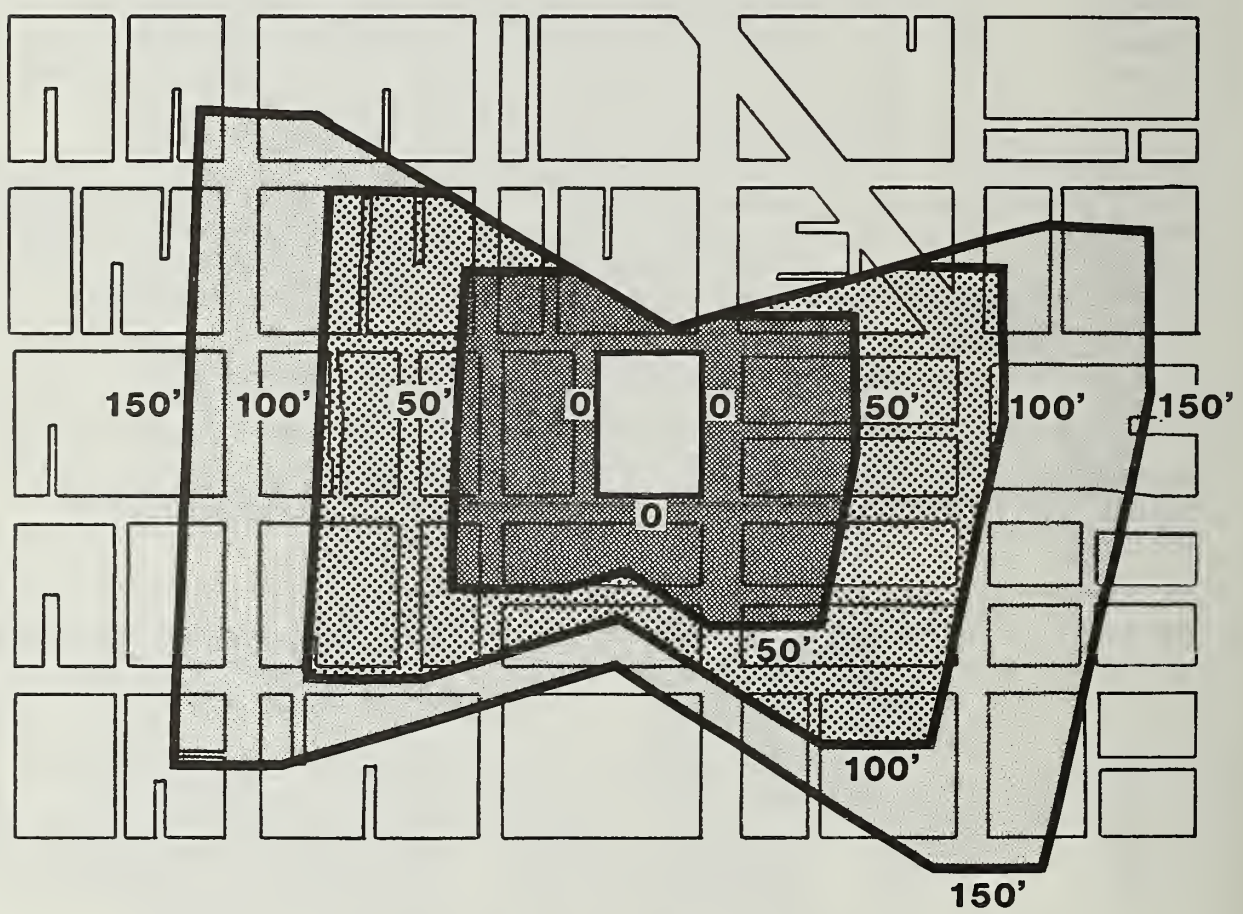
In addition to directly carrying out proposed Master Plan policies on Chinatown height, the changes also will support a number of proposed Chinatown Master Plan goals: (1) preserving the distinct urban character and cultural heritage of Chinatown; (2) creating a functional environment for existing community-serving uses; (3) creating a potential for increasing the supply of housing and (4) protecting the relatively sunny and windfree climate of Chinatown.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED HEIGHT DISTRICT CHANGES

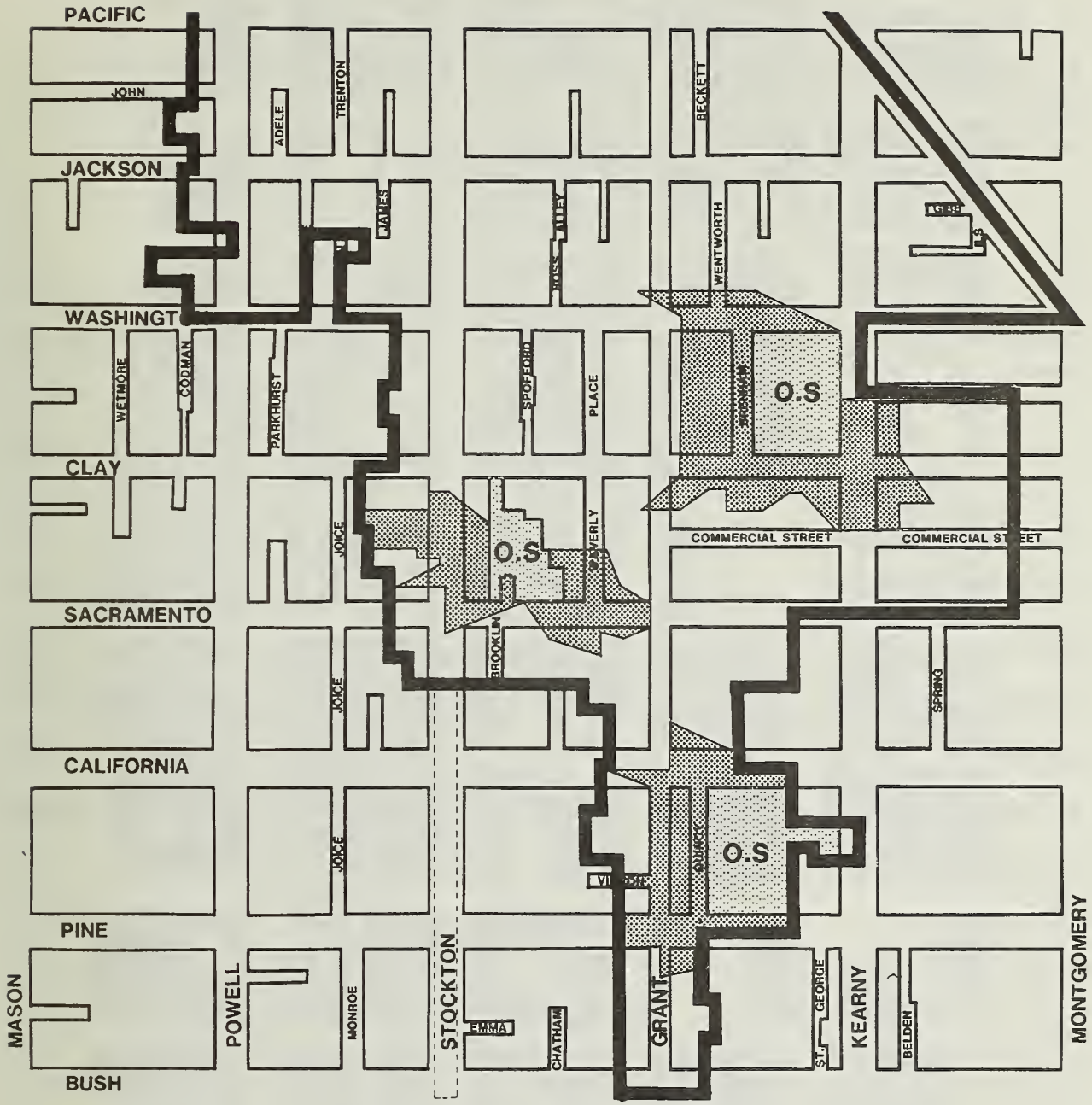
RECOMMENDED HEIGHT DISTRICT	EXISTING HEIGHT DISTRICTS	LOCATION; BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION
50 feet	Mostly 88 feet, small area of 320 feet	Grant Ave., Commercial Street; Preserve scale of Historic District and Commercial Street.
65 feet	65, 105, 160 feet	Stockton, Powell and Kearny Streets, Columbus Ave; relation to nearby streets and views, capacity for additional residential development and community business.
65 - 200 feet	65, 65-200, 300 feet	Portions of Kearny Street; transition to adjacent taller structures

A further factor affecting allowable Chinatown heights is the impact of Proposition K, the sunlight protection ordinance which mandates lowered heights near public open spaces. Prop. K provides that any structure over 40 feet in height shall not be approved if it will cast a shadow between an hour after sunrise and and hour before sunset if the shadow will adversely impact the use of properties under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department.

The figure below an example of a solar fan. A solar fan is the curved plane, shaped somewhat like a funnel, which describes the path of sunlight from the sun to the earth. As can be seen, the further away from a park, the higher a building can be without casting a shadow. The figure on the following page indicates those areas in Chinatown where the allowable height of a structure may be further limited by Proposition K.



GENERIC SOLAR FAN FOR PORTSMOUTH SQ.



POTENTIAL SUN ACCESS HEIGHT ADJUSTMENTS

CHINATOWN STUDY AREA

AREAS OF THE CHINATOWN STUDY AREA WHERE THE HEIGHT OF BUILDINGS MAY NEED TO BE REDUCED BELOW THE PROPOSED HEIGHT LIMITS TO COMPLY WITH THE SUN ACCESS LAW

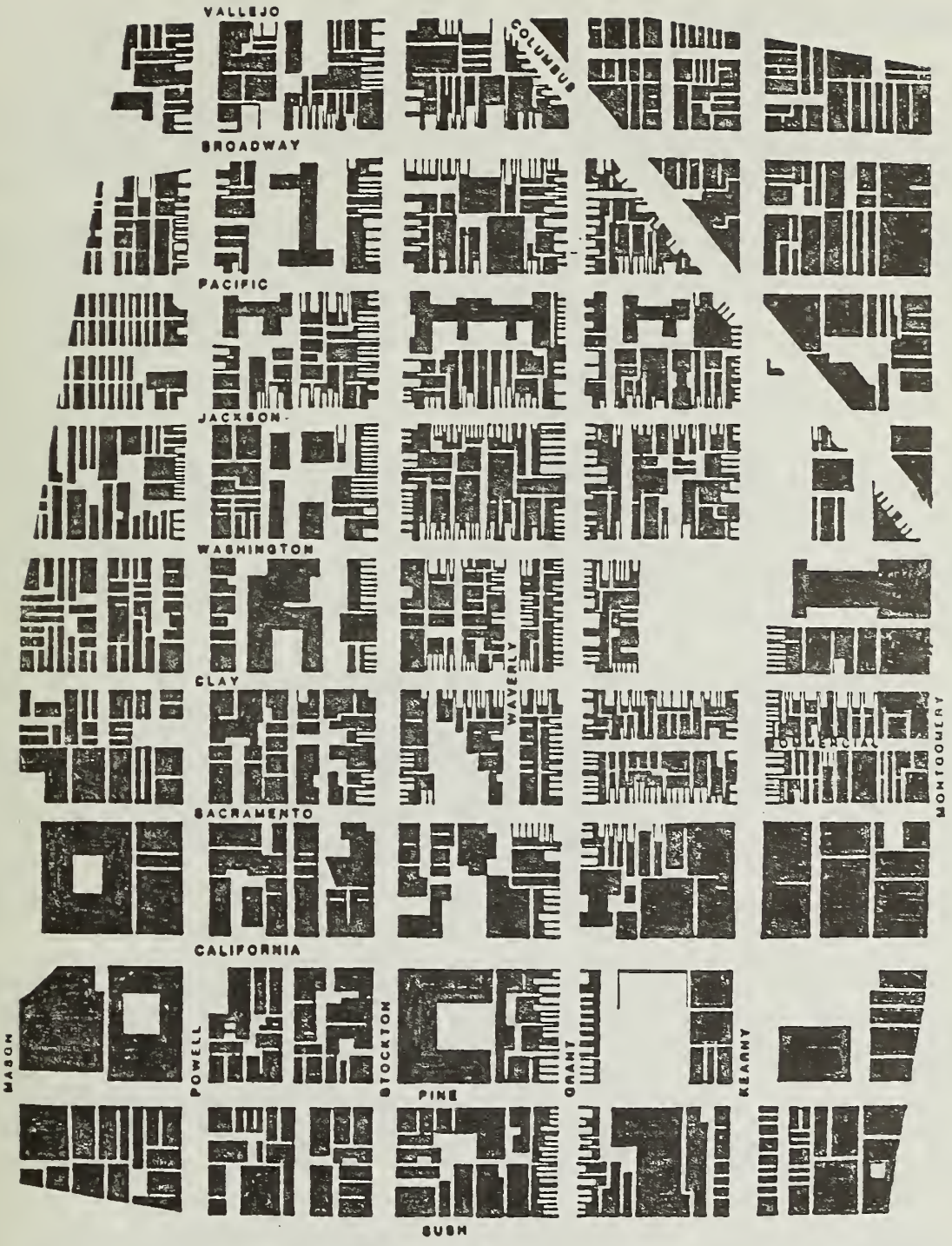
2. Sun Access to Public Sidewalks

To achieve as much sun on public sidewalks as possible during midday hours, setbacks should be provided on various streets in Chinatown. The following table summarizes the hours of sunlight protected between March and September if 15 foot setbacks are utilized at specified heights.

EFFECT OF 15 FOOT SUN ACCESS SETBACKS

Street Name	Street Width	Proposed Maximum Height	Profile Angle	Height for Setback	Hours of Sun March - Sept. a.m.	p.m.
					Sides of Street	
Grant	44 feet	50 feet	66°	35 feet	10:00 E	3:30 W
Stockton	65	65	42°	51	8:45 E	3:45 W
Kearny	75	50	33°	40	9:00 E	3:45 W
Kearny	75	65	35°	52	8:45 E	3:45 W
Kearny	75	200	69°	161	11:30 E	1:00 W
Vallejo	69	65	43°	51	9:15 S	sunset S
Broadway	81	65	38°	54	7:45 S	sunset S
Pacific	50	65	49°	47	9:45 S	2:30 S
Washington	50	65	49°	47	9:45 S	2:30 S
Clay	50	65	49°	47	9:45 S	2:30 S
Sacramento	50	65	49°	47	9:45 S	2:30 S

A series of setbacks within the same plane as a 15 foot setback would achieve the same result and could be approved. Encroachments should be permitted into this setback if a compensating increase in sunlight is achieved by a reduction elsewhere in the structure or elsewhere on the street.



PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED STOREFRONTS

3. Proposed Use Districts

Three new subdistricts are proposed for Chinatown. These include: (1) a Visitor Retail district along Grant Avenue, (2) a Community Business district along Broadway, Kearny and Commercial Streets and portions of Grant Avenue and (3) a Residential/Neighborhood Commercial district centered along Stockton and Powell Streets. These boundaries are shown on the Proposed Use District Map.

Standards for Commercial Uses - The 1,200 small businesses in Chinatown have an average floor area of 1,750 square feet. Most parcels of land have two or more small shops. To preserve the character of Chinatown, commercial uses should remain small scale, the permitted size in Chinatown of any single non-residential use in Chinatown should be no more than 2,500 square feet unless authorized as a conditional use. There should also be a limit of 30 linear feet of unbroken street frontage.

In view of the fact Chinatown has 22 financial institutions totaling 75,000 square feet and the displacement effect new financial institutions have on retailing and on community-serving businesses, new full service financial institutions should not be permitted in the Visitor Retail or Residential/ Neighborhood Commercial districts if there is a existing institution within 300 feet. New financial institutions should not use more than 30 feet of frontage on any block face.

Fast Food Restaurants are generally establishments serving ready to eat cooked food and beverages for immediate consumption. The food is usually in disposable containers and is consumed at the establishment. Some of Chinatown's butcher shops and restaurants which offer take out food may have aspects of fast food service, but they are usually combined with other services. Conditional use controls on Fast Food establishments which do not provide other services are appropriate in all three use districts.

Residential-Neighborhood Commercial District - This district is intended to be a residential area with ground floor, predominantly resident serving commercial uses (such as grocery stores, clothing stores, hardware, drug store, barber shops and beauty salons, travel agencies, banks). The size of individual commercial uses would generally be limited to 2,500 square feet. A size up to 4,000 square feet could be approved as a conditional use but only on condition that it were a use predominantly oriented to residents. The commercial uses would be limited to 1 FAR. Institutional and residential uses would not count against this FAR; garment shops would. The 65 foot height limit in this district would accommodate one floor of retail use and up to five floors of housing.

Visitor-Retail District - This district is intended to accommodate uses primarily appealing to visitors (e.g. tourist gift shops, jewelry stores, art goods, large restaurants). Here the base commercial FAR would be limited to 2:1. This FAR would accommodate tourist serving uses, such as a restaurant, above the first floor. Institutional and residential uses would not count against this FAR. The 50 foot height limit in this district would accommodate two floors of housing above two floors of visitor-oriented retail.

In both the residential-neighborhood commercial and the visitor retail districts most uses principally permitted in a C-2 district would be permitted except that financial institutions and fast food establishments would be

conditional uses. Parking, office and auto uses would be restricted. In addition, most of these two districts lie within the Garment Shop Special Use District which makes small scale garment shops a permitted use.

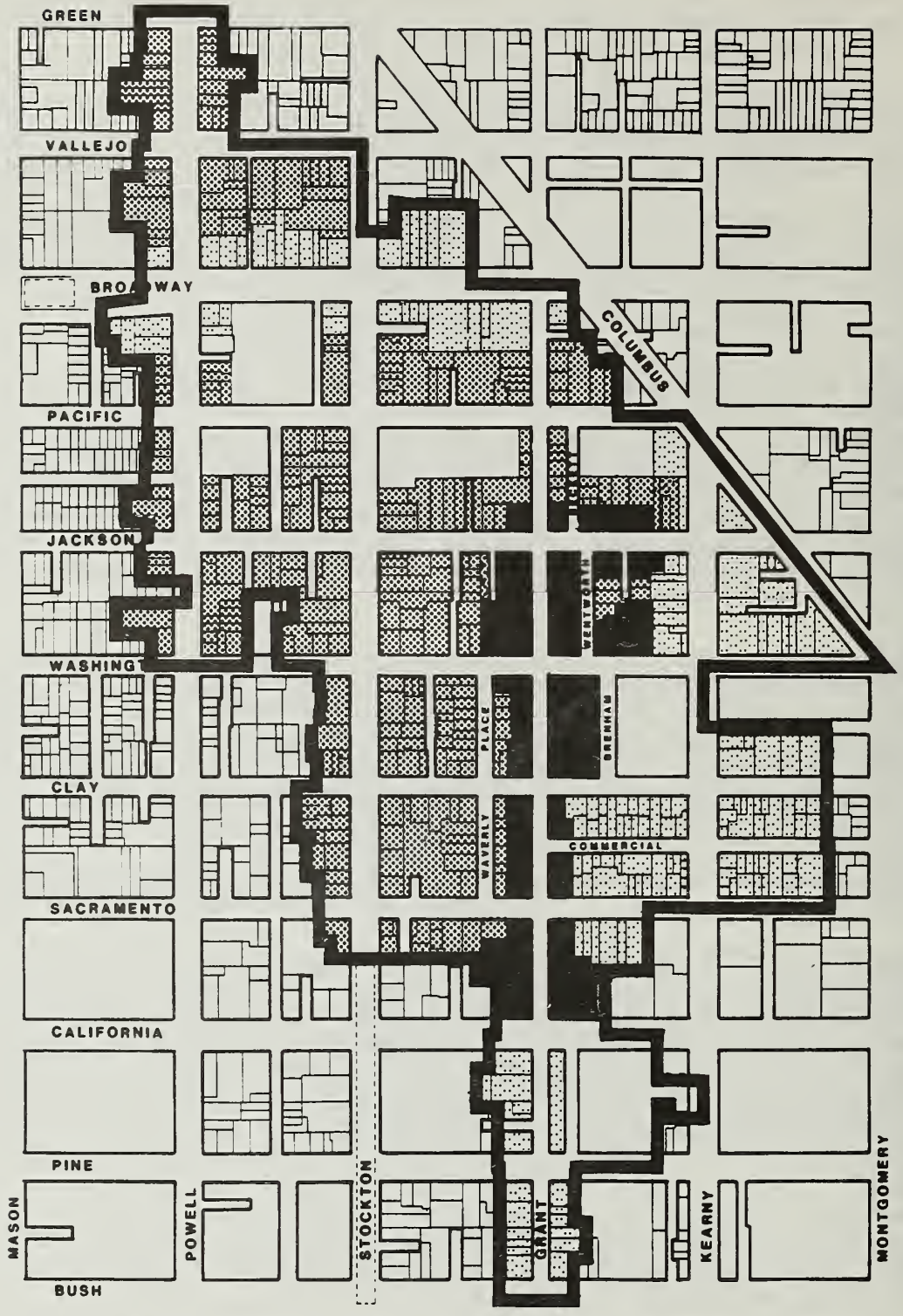
It would be too great an administrative burden to review and approve each specific commercial use to determine whether it supports or detracts from the intended predominant character of the district. However, the zoning framework will make it possible over time to modify the list of uses that are permitted, not permitted, or permitted only conditionally. Staff and the community can and should monitor the changes in uses that occur over time and if it appears that certain uses are proliferating to the point that the basic character of the districts (i.e. resident serving commercial or visitor retail) is threatened, additional such uses could be prohibited.

Community Business District - This zoning district is intended to accommodate modest expansion of Chinatown business activities as well as street level retail uses. Housing and institutional uses might also be provided. To prevent these areas from being used to accommodate larger office uses spilling over from the financial district the size of individual professional or business office uses in new buildings in this area would be limited to 5,000 square feet. This use size could be exceeded only through conditional use approval and only on condition that the intended use is one which serves the Chinatown community.

The base FAR for commercial uses is proposed to be 2.8 in this district. Institutional and residential uses would not count against the base FAR. The FAR could be increased if the commercial development is linked to housing development. One additional square foot of commercial space would be allowed for every square foot of new low/moderate income housing constructed on site or on another site within the study area or every square foot of existing housing within the study area which is substantially rehabilitated and seismically upgraded and rented at low/moderate income rents. A maximum of 4:1 FAR in the 50' height district and 5:1 in the 65' height district would be allowed.

Parking - Parking in Chinatown is a real dilemma. There are very few off street parking facilities, whether for housing or businesses. Because of the scarcity of land, it is very difficult to deal with the existing shortages. On the one hand, it would be desirable to impose a high parking requirement on new development, such as one parking space for every dwelling unit and one parking space for every 500 square feet of commercial space. On the other hand, the provision of parking adds substantially to the cost and given the physical constraints on building, could make the development of new housing impossible. The provision of commercial parking on small sites would take up desired retail frontage and create pedestrian conflicts. For this reason, most of the study area is currently in the Washington-Broadway Special Use District which imposes no non-residential parking requirement unless the size of the lot exceeds 20,000 square feet.

It is proposed that a residential parking requirement of 1:1 be imposed but that the requirement be permitted to be relaxed for low/moderate income housing or where it can be factually established that less parking will be required. It is proposed that commercial parking should continue to be required only in larger projects in the Community Business District when the development lot exceeds 20,000 square feet and the commercial space exceeds 10,000 square feet.



PROPOSED USE DISTRICTS

COMMUNITY BUSINESS

VISITOR RETAIL

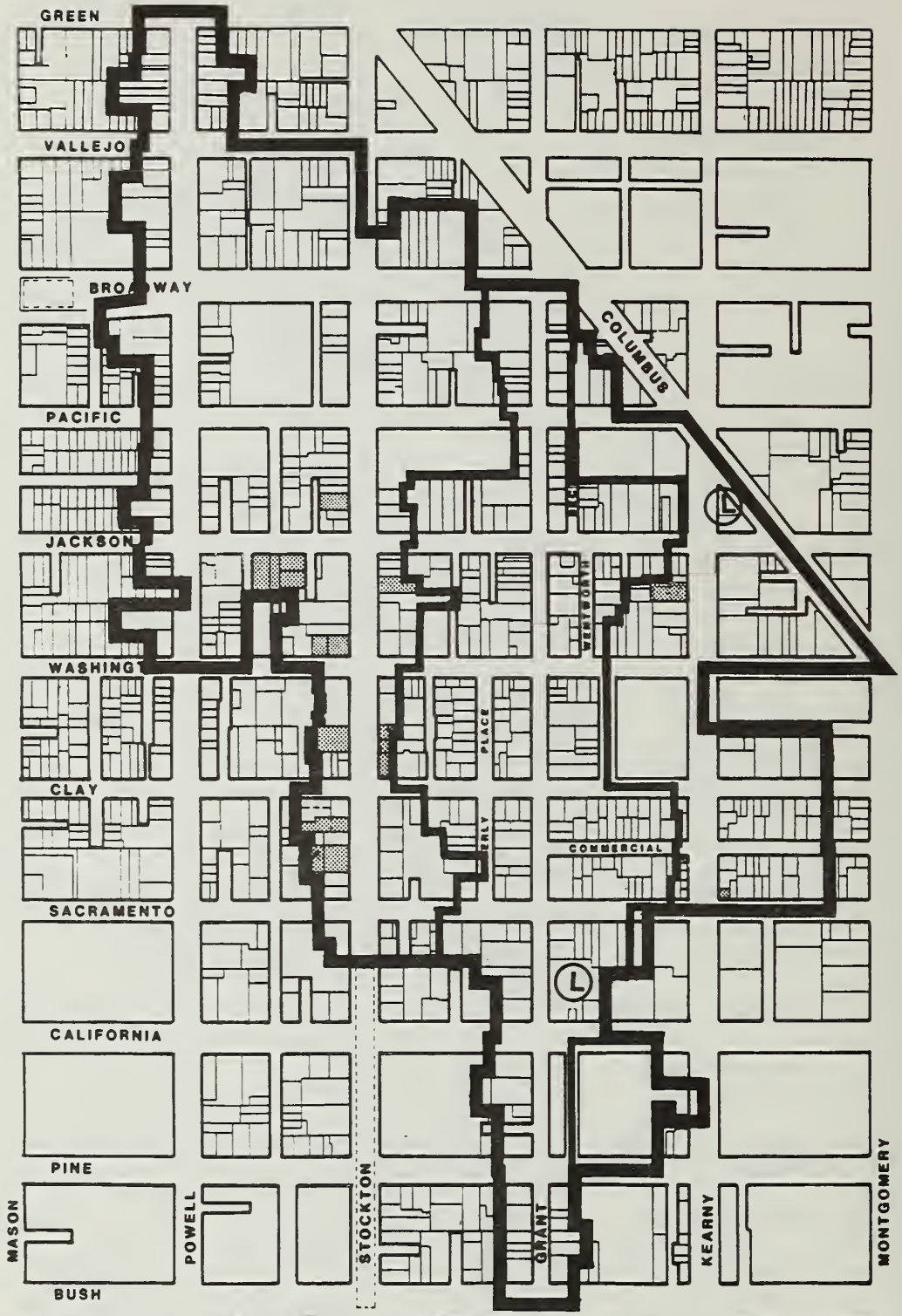
RESIDENTIAL/NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

Summary of Proposed Provisions in Chinatown Districts

	Residential Neighborhood Commercial	Community Business	Visitor Retail
Height	50 and 65 feet	65 feet	50 feet
Bulk	Maximum of 30 feet of unbroken street frontage. See Design Criteria		
Commercial Standards			
Commercial F.A.R.	1.0	2.8*	2.0
Useable Open Space	1 sq. ft. for every 50 sq. ft. above 10,000 sq. ft.		
Commercial Use Size	2,500 sq. ft. c.u. up to 4,000 sq. ft.	5,000 sq.ft. c.u. for more	2,500 sq.ft. c.u. up to 5,000 sq. ft.
Off Street Parking	None Required	1:500 when lot size over 20,000 sq.ft.	None Required
Non Residential Uses Permitted			
Bar	P	P	P
Full Service Restaurant	P	C	P
Fast Food Restaurant	C	C	C
Take Out Food	P	P	P
Movie Theatre	C	P	
Adult Entertainment			
Amusement Game Arcade			
Jewelry Store	C	P	P
Gift Store-Tourist Oriented		P	P
Other Retail Sales	P	P	P
Tourist Hotel	C	C	C
Financial Service	C	P	
Limited Finan. Service	C	P	
Medical Service	P	P	
Personal Service	P	P	P 2nd floor
Bus. & Prof. Services limited sizes		P	P 2nd floor
Light Manufacturing	Garment Shop Special Use District applies		
Institutions	Not counted as commercial Floor Area		
Residential Uses Permitted			
Dwellings	P	P	P
Other Housing	P	P	P
Residential Conversion & Demolition	One to one replacement requirements apply in all districts.		
Residential Standards			
Residential Density	1:200	1:200	1:200
Lot Coverage	75%	75%	75%
Open Space per unit	48 sq. ft.	48 sq. ft.	48 sq. ft.
Off Street Parking	1:1 except for lower income housing or demonstrated lesser need.		

The following symbols are used in this table:
P - Permitted as a principal use.
C - Permitted as a conditional use, subject to the provisions set forth in Section 315, City Planning Code.
- A blank space on the table indicates that the use or feature is not permitted. Unless a use or feature is specifically listed as permitted or required, such use or feature is prohibited.

* Additional square footage for housing construction or substantial rehabilitation of low/moderate income units



PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT

BOUNDARY OF PROPOSED DISTRICT

EXISTING CITY LANDMARKS

PROPOSED INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKS

4. Historic District

The proposed boundaries for the Chinatown Historic District were determined by a historic and architectural study of Chinatown by the Department of City Planning which included further analysis of ratings initially done by the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage and by a draft historic district case report which is currently pending action before the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board.

The Department's ratings were based on evaluation of a number of criteria which examined the building's architecture, history, relationship to the environment and integrity.

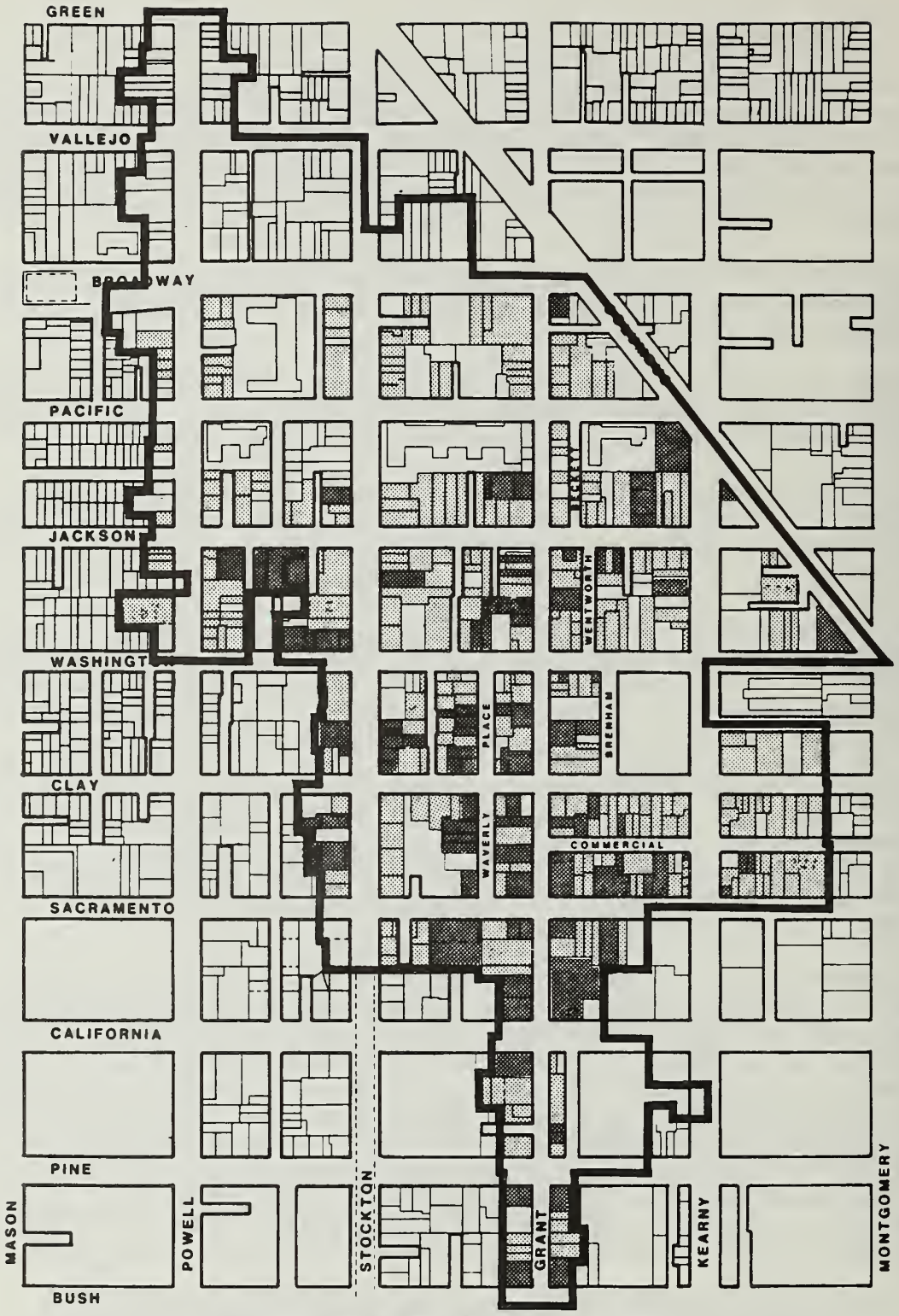
The proposed district boundaries were drawn with reference to concentrations of Significant buildings. Compatible buildings were used to refine boundaries since they provide a valuable setting for Significant buildings.

The proposed historic district contains the major areas of Significant buildings with Chinese detailing on Grant Avenue and Waverly Place, alleys such as Ross and Spofford, as well as portions of the east-west cross streets (i.e Sacramento, Clay, Washington and Jackson Streets).

Since Columbus Avenue and Kearny Street do not contain many Significant or Compatible buildings with Chinese features they were not included in the district. Stockton Street was also not included in the district since its Significant buildings are relatively dispersed and lack the strong sense of architectural continuity evident on Grant Avenue and Waverly Place.

The proposal includes approximately 238 buildings in the proposed district of which 61 were classified as Significant and 150 as Compatible. Twenty seven buildings were not classified due to their design or construction after 1945. Twelve additional buildings rated as Significant within the boundaries of the revised Chinatown Study Area are recommended as individual landmarks. They are shown on the accompanying map.

The proposed boundaries are smaller than those proposed by the Landmarks Board. In particular, the boundaries exclude Stockton Street, Kearny Street, Columbus Ave and Commercial Street between Kearny and Montgomery. There are some buildings in these areas which are classified as "Significant". Some of them are proposed as Individual Landmarks. The general scale and character of the areas excluded from the proposed Historic District also will be protected by the proposed height and building form rules. Many of the buildings will remain because there is little unused development on those sites. But there some development opportunities do exist in these areas for new housing and community business which should not be inhibited by inclusion in an historic district.



DCP RATINGS OF STRUCTURES

SIGNIFICANT

COMPATIBLE

5. Continuation of Garment Shop Industrial Use

The Department recommends the continuation of the Garment Shop Special Use District established in 1962 to permit this specialized industrial use in the Commercial zoning district on a small-scale basis. There has been a continuing trend for larger garment shops to move South of Market and for garment shops on ground floors in Chinatown to be converted to retail uses. In recognition of localized employment opportunity for some of Chinatown's residents, smaller scale garment shops should continue to be permitted.

6. Preservation of Existing Housing

Chinatown's 6,500 housing units, with their moderate rents ($118 per month was the average rent for rooms in Chinatown's residential hotels in 1984) are a virtually irreplaceable housing resource. The protection already provided to residential hotel units (two thirds of Chinatown's housing) should be extended to apartment units. Until recent interim controls in Chinatown and North Beach, such apartment units were under considerable pressure for commercial conversion.

The zoning provisions for all three proposed districts should require one to one replacement when existing housing is demolished. Replacement requirements for Chinatown and other neighborhoods near Downtown should be for newly constructed units, similar in size and rent structure to those demolished. These replacement units should be located on the same or another site in the neighborhood or within 3,000 feet of the development site.

7. Design Criteria for Bulk and Massing

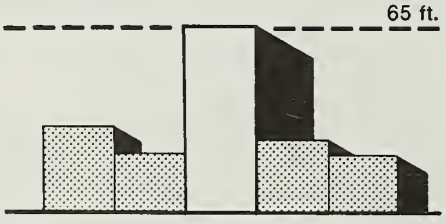
The Chinatown area is primarily composed of small-scaled buildings. Most existing buildings are quite low and due to the pattern of lots many are relatively short in depth as well. The typical lot size is only 3,500 square feet. The few large buildings in the area intrude into this fine-scaled texture of development. Further development along these lines would severely damage the appearance of this historic part of the city and would also produce deeply shadowed streets.

The urban design form objectives for new construction in Chinatown are intended to (1) integrate new buildings into the dominant fine scale of development characterized by small varied buildings in a manner that does not create sharp contrasts in scale or significantly alter the texture of the area as viewed from surrounding areas and (2) maintain the unifying rhythm of facade widths and the general scale of street walls as viewed from the streets.

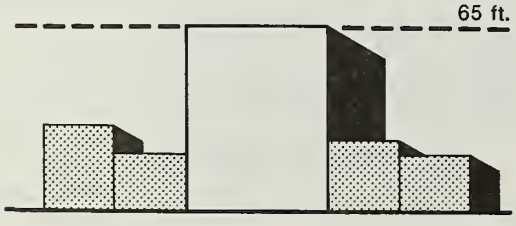
Generally buildings above a height of 40 feet should not exceed a width (measured parallel to the street) of 50 to 75 feet or a maximum diagonal of of 100 feet. As buildings approach these dimensions, increasingly stronger measures will be required to minimize the apparent bulk and scale of the project and insure a harmonious fit with the contextual setting. Larger projects may necessitate division of the facade into independent designs, changes of height of several floors and setbacks to achieve the desired relationships.

The applicable criteria for evaluating the acceptability of project proposals are as follows:

- Tall slender buildings with a height to width ratio of 2.5 to 1, and where the width is similar to that of lower neighbors, do not present a problem as the narrow width provides an adequate linkage in itself.

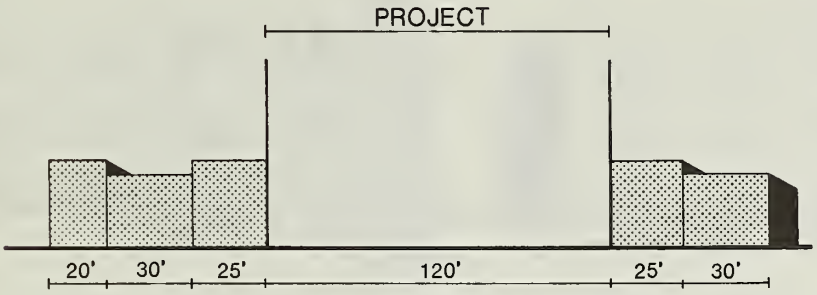


ACCEPTABLE
A slender building where the height to width ratio is about 2.5 to 1 shares a similar width with its small neighbors and thus does not intrude in a destructive fashion.

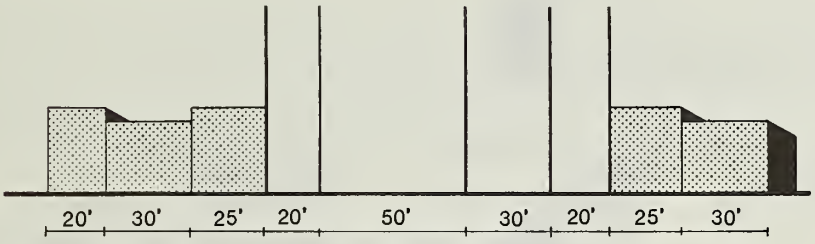


UNACCEPTABLE
This building has nothing in common with its smaller neighbors. It breaks the rhythm of the street and overwhelms the adjacent buildings with its excessive bulk.

- Projects having more than 50 feet width of street frontage should be divided in architectural treatment to appear as two or more independent buildings. The scale or division should reflect the typical scale of older buildings within the Chinatown area.

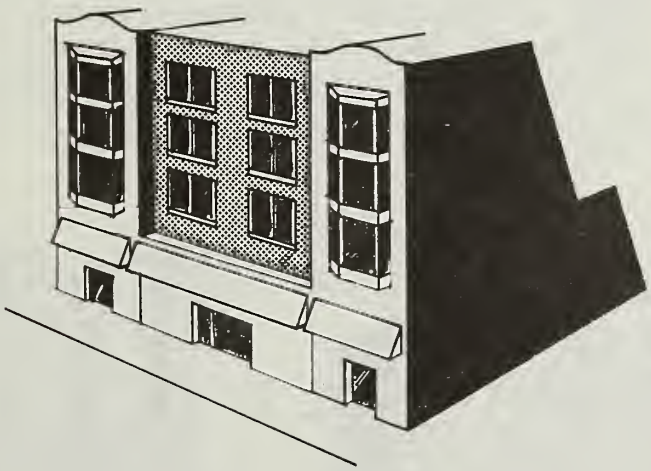


UNACCEPTABLE

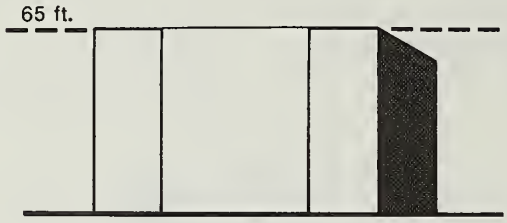


ACCEPTABLE

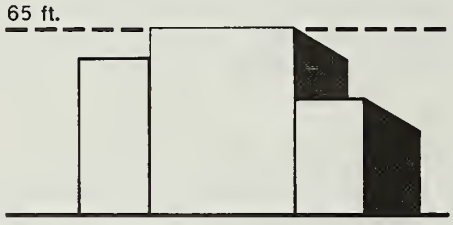
- Flat facade surfaces should be broken up, at least every thirty feet by the projection of bay windows or by a vertical recess.



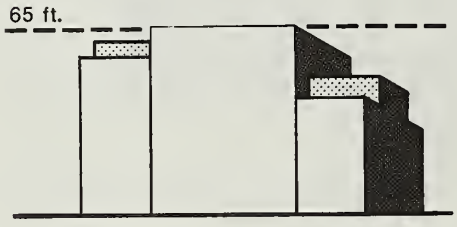
- The facade divisions of projects with a wide street frontage should be reinforced by matching changes in the height of portions of the building. These changes of height should be large enough to effectively break up the facade mass.



UNACCEPTABLE
The minor extension of the center parapet is not sufficient to break up the mass of the project and effectively differentiate the facades.

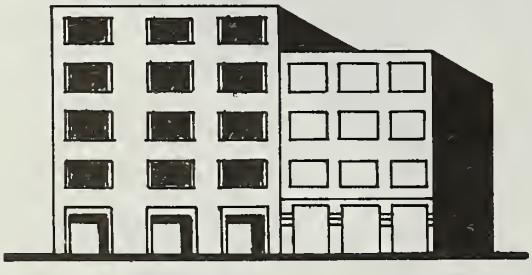


ACCEPTABLE



ACCEPTABLE
Additional volume may be recaptured provided it is set back from the street and does not damage the external view.

- The effective differentiation of facade requires more than small scale changes in detailing. At the ground level, independent entrances to shops help establish separateness of facades. Proceeding upward, differences in beltcourse design and elevation, window size, proportion and or placement, architectural treatment of the window frames, designs of cornices or parapets can achieve the same purpose. These differences can be further enhanced by use of color and materials.



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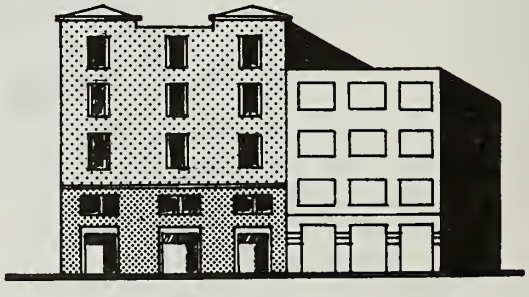
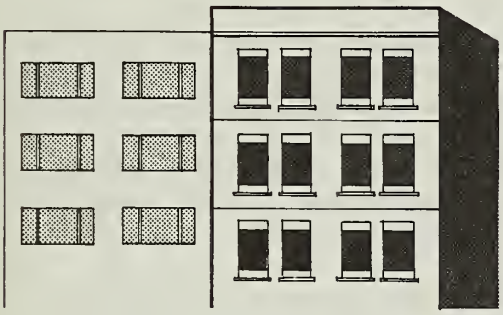


ACCEPTABLE

- Floor to floor heights should not be so low as to prevent the creation of facades that harmonize with the proportions of the dominant architecture of the Chinatown area.



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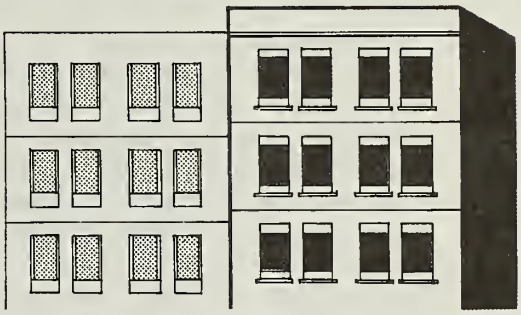
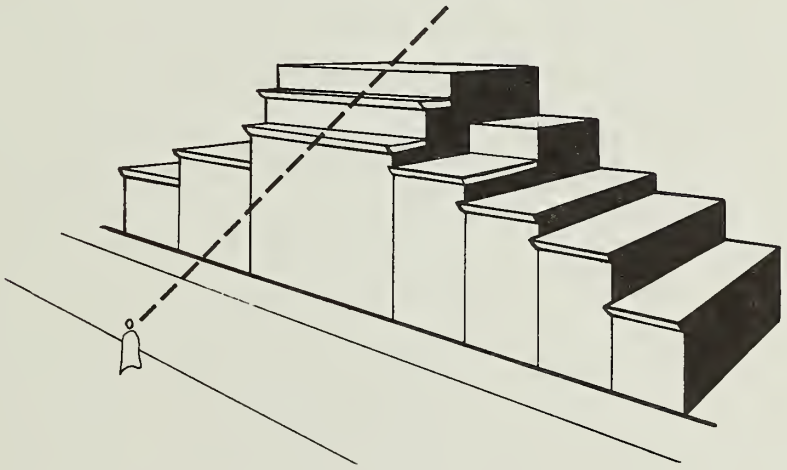


ACCEPTABLE

- Maintaining the continuity of street wall height is important to conserving the comfortable human scale of the streets in Chinatown. Setbacks from the street property line may be required at appropriate elevations to maintain this critical scale giving quality where an extended interruption would be damaging.



- Projects near buildings designated for preservation or otherwise highly rated in architectural surveys must give special consideration to the contextual requirements for these important buildings to remain in a harmonious setting.

- Large heavy building forms should be made to appear more delicate and compatible with the detail of existing buildings by the addition of fine scale extensions of the building. Exceptions to height limits allow an extended parapet and small open structures to facilitate achievement of this criteria.

- Projects near buildings designated for preservation or otherwise highly rated in architectural surveys must give special consideration to the contextual requirements for these important buildings to remain in a harmonious setting.

- Allow special treatment of corners. Strong corner forms help define the larger space of the intersection and reassert the traditional city pattern. Chinatown in particular is noted for slender corner towers. Height limits, setbacks and limits on horizontal dimensions should not apply to decorative pavilions, pagodas or sculptural features not exceeding 150 square feet in area. Decorative parapet configurations should be allowed to extend up to 8 feet above the height limits.

These design controls for Chinatown have been presented as guidelines rather than rigid rules. This is essential given the wide range of sites and situations in which a project may be proposed. The ultimate development potential of a given property is dependent not only on the zoning and height limit but also on the nature of surrounding development.

8. Residential Open Space

Site Coverage Normally, the San Francisco Planning Code rear yard provisions require that residential use not cover the rear 25% of the total depth of the lot. However, this rule could be modified if the new structure will not significantly impede the access of light and air to adjacent properties and residential site coverage is not increased and a comparable amount of open space is provided elsewhere on the lot.

Private and Common Open Space At the density proposed for Chinatown -- one unit per 200 square feet of lot area -- the residential open space requirement is 36 square feet. That requirement may be satisfied by the provision of common open space in the ratio of 1.33 square feet of common open space for every one square foot of required private open space. The provision of a large common open space may be preferable to small balconies attached to each unit. Typically common open space is provided in the form of ground level court yards. However, common open space on roof tops is also eligible. Roof top open space in Chinatown would be very desirable. It would be sunny and relatively wind free and would provide opportunities for small scale gardening. To encourage the provision of such space, there should not be a greater square footage requirement for common open space. Therefore it is proposed that the per unit square footage requirement be increased to 48 square feet per unit and that common open space be permitted in the ratio of one to one.

COMPARISON OF CHINESE SIX COMPANIES, RESOURCE CENTER/ASIAN NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN/CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING PROPOSALS

	CHINESE SIX COS	CRC/AND/CofC	DCP
Height	Reduce portion of 160' to 105' & 65'; reduce portion of 105' to 88'	50' along Grant 65'-85' northerly pt of study area	88', portion of 65', 320' to 50' remainder of area to 65 feet
Floor Area Ratio Commercial	3.6 & 4.8 - south 5 & 6 - north	4.8 Columbus Kearny and B'Way 1.0 elsewhere	2.8 - Community Bus with possible bonus 2.0 - Visitor Retail 1.0 - Residential/ Neighbrhd Comml.
Housing Provisions	Relocation assistance; 1:1 replacement; replace within 3000'of SUD; 25% of replacement could be met by fee; Rehab counted as 1/2 unit if aff. for 20 years.	1:1 replacement replacement within boundaries	1:1 replacement
Other Housing Provisions	Paired Dev @ 2:1 if more than 10,000 sq. ft. comml	Paired Dev @ 3:1 for comml in areas with 4.8 FAR New hsg not exempt fr. Rent Stabiliz.	More commercial in Comm. Bus if 1:1 new low/mod. units or seismic rehab.
Housing Incentives & Funding Strategies	15% of OHPP	height bonus; tax increment district (without Redev) & earmark of tourist tax	Low commercial FAR; Addl commercial FAR possible in Comm. Business District
Sub Districts	7 Res. Conserv Res. Intensif. High Density R/C Neigh Retail Viz Oriented Comml Retail/Comml Specialty Retail	4 Specialty Retail Retail/Comml Neigh. Comml Res. Conserv.	3 Visitor Retail Resid/Neigh. Comml Community Bus.
Commercial Provisions		More than 2500 sq. ft. requires CUP Limits on Finan. Institutions	More than 2500 sq. ft. requires CUP except Comm Bus.; Limits on Finan. Institutions

EPILOGUE

Chinatown - 1914

"You could spend all the working days of a month going up and down its streets and alleys... For Chinatown is a city, of and by and for itself... There is nothing like in any other part of the country... It is and always will be San Francisco's Chinatown, unique, a foreign country of ten city squares, living its own customs, rites and practices...

These people have a genius for elaborate decoration (that) blossoms out in vivid color and fantastic ornament...

A conspicuous fact about Chinatown is that it consists on the street level at least, almost wholly of shops. Here are the beautiful establishments of the Sing Fat Company, the Sing Chong Company, the Canton and Shanghai bazaars, the Nanking Fook Woh Company, the Wing Sing Loong Yokohama Company and W. Sang Lung Company, of Chee Chong and Co., and Yuen Lee and Co. Millions are invested in the stocks to these establishments and they attract visitors from all over the world.

At 125 Waverly Place is the building of the Sue Hing Benevolent Association, its upper story a Joss house and one of the finest in the quarter. This word "Joss", by the way is the Chinese version of the Portugeuse "Deos" meaning God, so that a "Joss house" is, literally, a House of God. This Joss house is the Temple of the Queen of Heaven. Waverly Place, two blocks long contains many of the buildings and meeting places of the benevolent associations.

South of Clay Street, at 843 Stockton in the building with the blue enameled vestibule is the conclave hall of the Six Companies. The place is handsomely appointed, with a long council table and a row of seven seats where sit the presidents of the Six Companies.

Up Jackson street from Grant Avenue are several manufacturing jewelers' shops.

But one cannot satisfy his interest in one visit to any two or twenty definite points. It is the community life that must be sensed, the hundred variations of practice, habit and custom, manners and art, to make the thing really enjoyable."

From San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, Handbook for San Francisco, A Guide for Visitors, 1914

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Toby Rosenblatt, President
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Roger Boas, Chief Administrative Officer
Norman Karasick, Alternate
Rudy Nothenberg, Public Utilities Commission
Douglas Wright, Alternate

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

Dean L. Macris, Director of Planning
Milton Edelin, Deputy Director of Planning
Robert Passmore, Zoning Administrator
George Williams, Assistant Director, Plans and Programs
Robin Jones, Chief of Programs

PROJECT TEAM

Lois Heyman Scott, Planning Coordinator
Lulu Hwang Mabelitini, Planner
Richard Hedman, Planner (Urban Design)
Rana Ahmadi, Planner (Solar Access)
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